

Visual Perception as Environmental Social Perception in the Animated Music Video "Sabda Alam"

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Abstract

Animated music video does not only act as a spectacle, but it can function as an informative as well as persuasive media campaign. As a product of visual culture, animated music videos have the potential to build a visual perception of the topic presented. Visual culture has now become a daily part of human activity, because visual technology allows various information, meanings or pleasures needed by humans to be fulfilled instantly through audiovisual language. This study discusses the animated music video "Sabda Alam" by students of the Raden Umar Said Vocational High School, Kudus, Central Java, which campaigns for the protection of endemic birds in Indonesia. This animated music video is interesting to study because it conveys campaign messages indirectly through 2D animated visual narratives. This study uses a combination method to analyze the visual language that shapes the audience's perception. Qualitatively, the discussion uses a social perception approach to analyze the basics of perception formation. Meanwhile, quantitatively, a survey was conducted on 150 viewers randomly to find the elements of perception formed, based on the product position target segmentation guidelines. The results showed that this animated music video was able to form perception of message content, perception of animated visualization, perception of narrative, perceptions of music, perception of environmental knowledge, perception of wildlife care, and perception of causal factors of endemic birds extinction. It is hoped that the results of this research can become an academic reference, especially in the field of visual communication design, and become an inspirational and communicative media campaign model in product design development in the creative industries sector. The results showed that this animated music video was able to form perception of message content, perception of animated visualization, perception of narrative, perceptions of music, perception of environmental knowledge, perception of wildlife care, and perception of causal factors of endemic birds extinction. It is hoped that the results of this research can become an academic reference, especially in the field of visual communication design, and become an inspirational and communicative media campaign model in product design development in the creative industries sector.

Keywords: Video, Music, Animation, Visual Perception

INTRODUCTION

Visual communication media has become an inseparable part of modern human life. Types of information media to disseminate this message have been designed in various forms, both print and electronic. Currently, audio-visual media such as film and video are the main choices circulating on social media. Its existence has even become a product of visual culture. It is said by Nicholas Mirzoeff (1999: 3) that "visual culture is concerned with visual events in which information, meaning, or pleasure is sought by the consumer in an interface with visual technology". In terms of visual technology, messages are conveyed through moving images with audio support, which are presented on a screen, so that the audience, through their senses of sight and hearing, can pay attention according to their interests and selection, and interpret what they see, as a visual perception.

This study discusses visual cultural products in the form of animated music videos, which are designed to convey messages about the environment, especially wild birds in Indonesia which are threatened with extinction. Animated music videos are a combination of short animated films with popular music accompaniment, which can be equipped with or without dialogue. As a campaign media in the form of animated music videos, the main strength of this media is mainly in the visual narrative and musical accompaniment which form an entity.

Windhal (in Winarni and Wardani, 2015: 39) states that, whatever the campaign objective, the campaign model must be specific to make it more attractive. The principles in the main objectives of the campaign include, among other things, building public awareness of the issues raised, inviting changes in attitudes and behavior from the public so that they become involved, as well as educating the public through messages containing knowledge and socio-cultural values.

The animated music video entitled "Sabda Alam" was created by students at the Raden Umar Said Vocational Middle School (SMK), Kudus, Central Java, in 2021. This video product is a study featured in this research on the formation of visual perception. "Sabda Alam" tells the story of the struggle of four endemic Indonesian birds to survive in their habitat. However, they are helpless, because hunting causes them to be caught and traded in the illegal wildlife market. Endemic birds which are protected under the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) red list of threatened species in the categories of vulnerable, endangered or threatened with extinction, include the Yellow-crested Cockatoo and the Bali Starling (https://www.bps.go.id/indikator/indikator/view_data/0000/data/1297/sdgs_15/1). The animated music video for "Sabda Alam" has been broadcast via the RUS Animation Studio YouTube channel since November 2021. This broadcast is considered capable of attracting the attention of the audience, and has the potential to form visual perception, because it has been watched by more than three million viewers. The visual narrative in this video indirectly educates the public about environmental issues and knowledge about natural resources as ecosystem supports. The ideas presented through the narrative are also inseparable from the socio-cultural factors that influence them. Therefore, the design of this animated music video cannot be separated from the context of its visualization as a representation of socio-cultural issues that exist in society. Efforts to build the same visual perception through animated music video narration is a positive strategy.

According to Eymeren (2014: 50), visual perception is a cognitive psychological process in art and design, which functions to obtain accurate information about characteristics in the world, especially through stimulation patterns from objects around human activities that involve light, eyes, location, and movement. In other words, a viewing product as a work of art and design, includes a pattern of stimuli that encourages someone to interpret the message of the object they are watching.

Research on animated music videos that raise environmental themes is rare. Generally, research discusses the design of animated music videos for the needs of song promotional media and learning media. Among other things, there is research on creating interactive animations of natural and artificial environments using video motion to add learning tools for teachers to attract the interest and attention of students at school (Solihah, and Sundari, 2020). There is also research by Yusa and Rukmi (2017) on designing videos based on 2-dimensional animation, as one of the recommendations for educational solutions, to prevent health impacts due to environmental pollution by mercury in Central Lombok.

It is said in research by Ahmad, et al. (2015: 283) that the lack of public knowledge about the environment is influenced by the appropriate form of media in disseminating information. Specifically, the results of this research state that video media can be an educational medium that is able to influence and change a person's behavior in a positive direction, so it is considered quite effective in providing knowledge about the environment.

Based on the elaboration above, this research formulates a research question about what are the visual perceptions that become social perceptions of the environment in the animated music video "Sabda Alam"? This study aims to explain the potential of animated music videos as campaign media to convey environmental messages through the formation of audience visual perceptions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a combination method, namely qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative method, namely an analysis method based on collecting natural data obtained from literature studies, involved or non-involved observations, interviews with sources, and providing descriptive meaning. Meanwhile, the quantitative method was applied to audiences who had watched and were invited to watch the animated music video "Sabda Alam". In this case, the audience is heterogeneous, and randomly selected, because this video is broadcast via social media. The audience as the target audience for the campaign message in this video is expected to provide input about their visual perceptions after watching "Sabda Alam".

Qualitatively, the discussion in this paper uses a social perception approach, an environmental communication approach, and elements in animated music videos. In Roland Barthes' view, the main purpose of most contemporary advertising media is to speak indirectly to the subconscious mind (Danesi, 2011: 305). This subconscious mind is what gives rise to various visual perceptions. In the cultural approach, perception is culture-bound. How humans interpret messages, objects, or the environment depends on the value system they adhere to. According to Mulyana (in Wardani, 2015: 111-112) perception of humans is also called social perception. Social perception in the context of viewing products mainly contains four important principles, namely: Perception is based on experience, perception is selective, perception is evaluative, and perception is contextual. This thought becomes the basis for discussion in interpreting the visual narrative about the environmental message in the animated music video.

Meanwhile, in the environmental communication approach, there are guidelines that must be followed so that a show attracts attention and is in accordance with the target to be achieved. Cox (in Rani, 2016: 3) explains, in a symbolic context, the function of environmental communication can be divided into two, namely: 1. Environmental communication that is capable of educating, reminding, persuading, and helping to solve environmental problems. 2. Environmental communication as another form of symbolic actions, which represents problems that occur in the environment and becomes a reference for designing appropriate solutions.

In the context of the animated music video "Sabda Alam", the message in this spectacle can be seen from an environmental communication approach, because it contains visual elements as signs that represent visual meanings. The main elements in animated music video design consist of theme elements, narrative, illustration style and music.

Meanwhile, quantitatively, data collection was carried out using a survey method on one hundred and fifty (150) respondents aged between seventeen (17) to sixty (60) years, who work as students, workers, and those who like to access videos via the YouTube channel. . Distribution of the questionnaire was carried out via a Google form link and distributed via WhatsApp based on randomly selected groups of students and workers. The questionnaire answer scale uses a Likert scale, namely: Strongly agree, agree, doubtful, disagree, strongly disagree.

The focus of this combination method aims to combine the results of the data obtained and conclude whether the results of quantitative and qualitative data strengthen, weaken or contradict each other (Sugiyono, 2011: 499). Both qualitative and quantitative methods are needed to complement each other's analysis needs.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Data Results for Design Elements of the Animation Music Video "Sabda Alam"

The animated music video "Sabda Alam" is designed in the form of a two-dimensional (2D) animation with a duration of 6 minutes 14 seconds. This spectacle product is the work of class 12 students at SMK Raden Umar Said Kudus, Central Java. The design elements that give visual strength to this spectacle are:

1. Element of Theme

Sudjiman (in Wardani, 2011: 47) explains the theme as the central idea, or main idea that underlies a story. In the theme, there is the meaning of the message to be conveyed. However, finding the meaning of the message in this theme is sometimes not easy, because everyone has different cognitive aspects. The animated music video for "Sabda Alam" raises the theme of the environment, especially the protection of endemic birds in Indonesia. This is in accordance with the Instruction Letter of the Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia Number INS.1/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM//1/6/2022 concerning Protection of Wildlife Against Threats of Entrapment and Poaching Inside and Outside Forest Areas. The aim is to protect the existence of wild animals which are one of the potential biological natural resources that support ecosystems. The choice of this theme is a form of participation from vocational education institutions to support government programs in the environmental sector, especially protecting the natural habitat of endangered wild birds.

2. Element of Narrative

The choice of theme depends on the target audience to be achieved. The development of the story within the theme is needed to convey the true meaning of the message. The narrative in the animated music video is divided into three storyline sections.

- a. The first part of the narrative tells about the free lives of the four bird characters who are the main characters, namely the Yellow-crested Old Brother, Bali Starling, Ivory Hornbill, and Ekek Geling, who live freely to breed in their natural habitat in the fertile forest.
- b. The middle part of the narrative tells about the arrival of poachers who catch the birds and bring them to the illegal animal market to be traded. This section also tells the story of the suffering of birds who are locked up and threatened with death.
- c. The closing narrative tells about the destruction of natural habitats, due to the extinction of wild animals as one of the links in the ecosystem.

3. Element of Illustration Style

The illustration style is needed in forming the visual character and depiction of the setting. Halawa, et al., (in Wardani, 2022: 404) states that illustration is the art of drawing that is used to provide a visual explanation, including filling in empty spaces, even for non-verbal spectacles. Based on the results of the researcher's interview with Sigit Hermawan, a cinematographer consultant from RUS Studio Animation, all the bird characters in the animated music video "Sabda Alam" use an illustration style dominated by curved lines, as a semi-realist style that refers to humanistic expressions. Curved lines, is one aspect of design that is widely used to describe characters who are soft, weak, and adaptive to situations. According to Pradesta and Aryanto (2020: 169) the semi-realist style is a combination of a cartoon style with a realist style. This illustration style can help broaden the exploration of the desired character design, making it possible to visualize it more attractively.

4. Element of Music

The animated music video for "Sabda Alam" uses music from the popular song of the same name, which was sung by Chrisye and Junaedi Salat in 1978. This song was rearranged by Tohpati, and sung again by a team of singers who accompany the narration in the video. The presence of music is important in animated music videos, because it is the main element that is able to build an entity in the overall narrative. Music can also influence the audience's emotional and psychological responses. The research results of Wardani, et al. (2023: 148) shows that musical elements in animated music videos can create feelings of sadness, joy, fear, anxiety or anger. Meanwhile, to build an atmosphere, musical elements can give meaning to a picture of a beautiful, warm, quiet and eerie atmosphere. Then the musical element can become an identity, because it makes the audience remember the product being watched. Apart from that, musical elements function as opening music, climax music, transition music and ending music.

Data Results and Discussion of Visual Perception as Social Perception

The survey was conducted on viewers of the animated music video "Sabda Alam", referring to product target segmentation (STP) guidelines, namely answering initial questions based on the results of researchers' observations and interviews with resource persons at SMK Raden Umar Said, Kudus. In this case, the research team conducted an interview with the Head of the Animation Studio Program, Rico Andriansyah, who is also responsible for Project Factory Management. The results of the formulation of the target guidelines can be described as follows:

1. The target of the animated music video "Sabda Alam" is aimed at all Indonesian society, which is heterogeneous, because education about the importance of protecting the habitat of wild animals needs to be known by all people
2. Method of delivering campaign messages, using animated music videos designed in a 2D animation style, and distributed via social media. It is hoped that this model of conveying messages through animation on social media will attract more attention and be easier to understand.
3. The specific aim of the animated music video "Sabda Alam" is not only to support government programs in the environmental sector, but also to encourage the public to get involved in various actions to protect wild animals.
4. The information conveyed through the animated music video "Sabda Alam" is knowledge about endemic bird species in Indonesia, and the causal factors that have the potential to result in the increasing extinction of protected wild animals. This spectacle is based on stories of illegal hunting that are widely circulated on news sites, so the narrative design is a combination of fact and fiction.
5. This spectacle product can inspire and encourage people to forward campaign messages to their environment, as well as become a reference for producing other creative industry works, with emphasis on themes of socio-cultural issues.
6. Evidence of the success of the viewing product is related to viewing satisfaction. This can be seen from the number of subscribers to the RUS Animation Studio YouTube channel, which has reached more than 25 thousand with more than three million viewers, and comments by more than 2,000 netizens. Apart from that, with the assistance of facilitation from the Djarum Foundation, this animated music video also received a lot of appreciation from international filmmakers and journalists when it was included in the 2021 Balinale International Film Festival.
7. The expected response after watching the animated music video for "Sabda Alam" is that people can change their behavior, stop poaching, and actively participate in conserving protected wild animals.

In an environmental communication approach, the animated music video "Sabda Alam" has significantly positioned its function as a media campaign that can educate, persuade and appeal to audiences, as well as represent the condition of endemic birds in Indonesia which are threatened with extinction through an interesting visual narrative. As Animation Mentor Hizkia Subiyantoro said (based on the results of an interview with the research team in July 2023) that a design must contain "problem solving". Because that is the core of communication that should be accomplished through visuals, apart from aesthetics and artistic. A persuasive storytelling style can also reinforce the goals of the campaign through animated music videos. Therefore, the things that are conveyed through the animated music video "Sabda Alam" can only be visual signs that are symbolic, because they are recognized as conventions in society. When a visual sign is read as an agreement, it allows the formation of a uniform perception, to find the right solution in society.

Based on the results of a survey of 150 respondents, the percentage of visual perception of the animated music video "Sabda Alam" was obtained. The results of quantitative data with a Likert scale show that there are seven visual perceptions that are formed, with the following explanation:

1. Perception of message content

The percentage of quantitative data in terms of perceptions of the contents of the message is as follows: as many as 75 (50%) of respondents stated that they strongly agreed, as many as 67 (45%) of respondents agreed, as many as 8 (5%) of respondents said they were doubtful, while those who disagreed, and those who said they strongly disagreed were 0%. The total percentage of respondents who strongly agree and agree is 95% on the grounds that the message content of the animated music video can be understood.

2. Perception of animated visualization.

The percentage of quantitative data in terms of perceptions of animated visualization is as follows: as many as 44 (29%) respondents said they strongly agreed, as many as 99 (66%) respondents agreed, as many as 7 (5%) respondents said they were doubtful, while those who said they disagreed, and those who said they strongly disagreed were 0%. The total percentage of respondents who strongly agree and agree is 95% for the reason that the visualization in the animated music video is able to build the audience's imagination in interpreting the scenes shown.

3. Perception of narrative

The percentage of quantitative data in terms of perceptions of the animated music video narration are as follows: as many as 62 (41 %) respondents stated that they strongly agreed, as many as 75 (50 %) respondents agreed, as many as 13 (9 %) respondents said they were doubtful, while those who stated disagree, and those who strongly disagree the result is 0%. The total percentage of respondents who strongly agree and agree is 91% on the grounds of the attractiveness of the storyline, thus encouraging the audience to watch it to the end.

4. Perception of music

The percentage of quantitative data in terms of perceptions of music is as follows: as many as 56 (37%) of respondents stated that they strongly agreed, as many as 75 (50%) of respondents agreed, as many as 18 (12%) of respondents stated they were doubtful, while those who disagreed were as many as 1 (1%), and those who said they strongly disagreed were 0%. The total percentage of respondents who strongly agree and agree is 87% for the reason that the music is able to evoke the emotions of the audience, making the audience participate in imagining the events experienced by endemic birds.

5. Perception of environmental knowledge.

The percentage of quantitative data in terms of perceptions of environmental knowledge is as follows: as many as 59 (39%) respondents said they strongly agree, as many as 79 (53%) respondents agreed, as many as 12 (8%) respondents said they were doubtful, while those who said they disagreed, and those who said they strongly disagreed were 0%. The total percentage of respondents who strongly agree and agree is 92% with the reason that the animated music video can increase insight into environmental problems.

6. Perception of wildlife care

The percentage of quantitative data in terms of perceptions of wildlife concern is as follows: as many as 69 (46%) respondents said they strongly agree, as many as 72 (48%) respondents agreed, as many as 8 (5%) respondents said they were doubtful, while those who said they didn't 1 (1%) respondent agreed, and those who strongly disagreed were 0%. The total percentage of respondents who strongly agreed and agreed was 94%, with the reason that the scene of the situation of endemic birds after being captured and traded was able to inspire and build awareness of the audience to be caring.

7. Perception of causal factors

The percentage of quantitative data in terms of perceptions of the factors causing the threat to the preservation of endemic birds is as follows: as many as 74 (49%) respondents said they strongly agreed, as many as 51 (34%) respondents agreed, as many as 13 (9%) respondents said they were doubtful, while those who said they disagreed were 8 (5%) respondents, and those who said they strongly disagreed were 4 (3%). The total percentage of respondents who strongly agreed and agreed was 83% with the reason that the story shown was based on the phenomenon of poachers which is often reported in the mass media.

Based on the results of the quantitative data, the results of the seven visual perceptions above can be related to, especially the four important principles in social perception (Mulyana, 2013: 199-211), namely perception based on experience, perception is selective, perception is evaluative, and perception is contextual.

Perception of message content, perception of animated visualization, and perception of narrative can be categorized as selective perception formation, where human attention to the sensory stimuli they receive is influenced by internal factors, including socio-cultural factors (including education), then other factors. psychological (including motivation, desires and feelings), as well as external factors, including movement, intensity and novelty factors, of the object that attracts attention. Viewers of the animated music video "Sabda Alam" have indirectly gone through a selective stage, because basically humans always learn to deal with various sensory stimuli by choosing stimuli that suit their needs. The viewers of this animated music video are also generally educated, having an interest in audio-visual viewing products. Even though "Sabda Alam" was designed as campaign media, its presentation offers novelty, where the campaign message is conveyed implicitly through a visual narrative that arouses the feelings of the audience.

Furthermore, perception of music and perception of environmental knowledge can be categorized as the formation of perceptions based on experience and perceptions that are evaluative in nature. Human experience in the past and what has been learned through its culture will affect one's reaction to something. Likewise, perception is evaluative, human interpretation of something will be based on their interests and past. In the context of the animated music video "Sabda Alam", the audience's perception of music is influenced by their experience of the music. Moreover, the music used is a popular song from a legendary singer, so understanding the song indirectly affects emotions. Likewise in terms of knowledge about the environment. As a viewer who is often exposed to information, the audience's perception is very likely influenced by news about protected wildlife issues, which have been widely circulated in the mass media.

Meanwhile, perception of wildlife care and perception of causal factors can be categorized as contextual perception formation. Context is the background of the object being perceived. Interpretation of meaning in context is an important factor in understanding communication and social relations. Basically, the audience's ability to interpret what the eyes see is influenced by previous knowledge and experience. In their subconscious perception, the audience actually does not only see something, but also how to see it. This is what allows the emergence of perceptions of concern and perceptions about the causal factors of these wildlife problems. These two perceptions can be formed by giving a climax to the scene shown, in the form of the conditions experienced by endemic birds when they are traded in illegal animal markets. The formation of these two perceptions is important, as an effort to convey campaign messages. The visual narration in this animated music video is also considered effective enough to influence the minds of the audience.

In general, the overall visual perception as a social perception of the environment which is formed through the animated music video "Sabda Alam" can be seen in the following chart and table

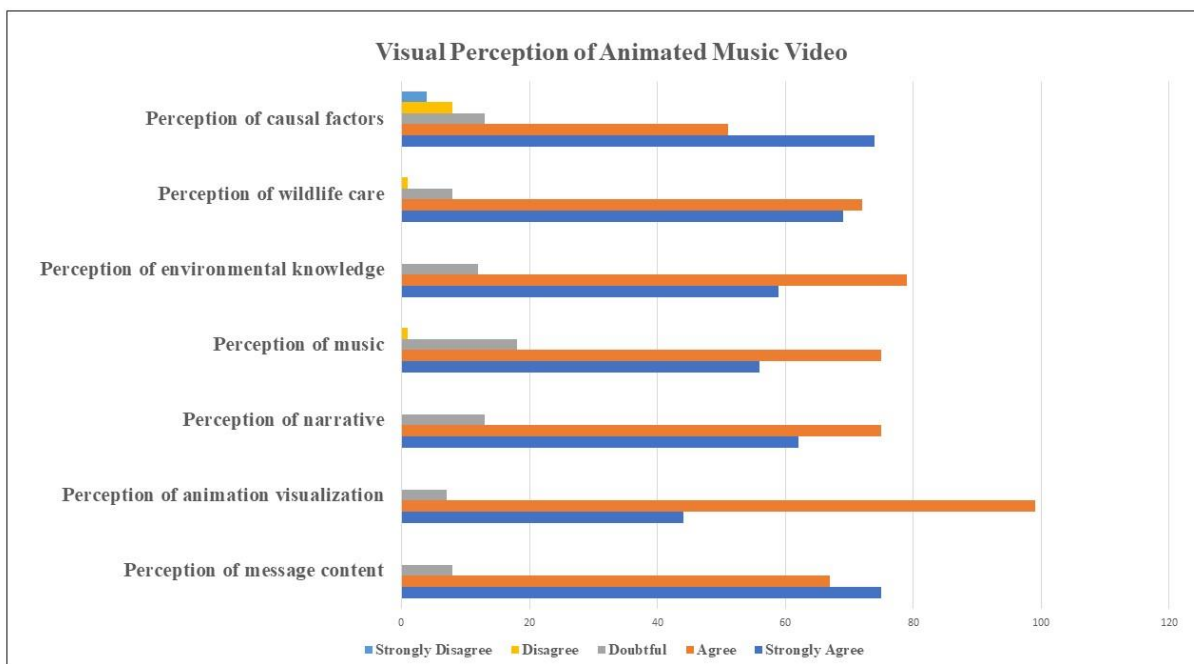


Figure1. Visual Perception of Animated Music Video “Sabda Alam”
Source: Private Document, 2023

Tabel 1. Visual Perception in the Social Perception Category in the Animated Music Video "Sabda Alam"

Visual Perception	Social Perception Category	Animated Music Video
Perception of message content Perception of visualization animation Perception of narrative	Perception is selective	Messages are easy to understand, animated visualization builds imagination, narration builds appeal
Perception of music Perception of environmental knowledge	Perception based on experience, and perception is evaluative	Music arouses emotions, and environmental knowledge broadens insight
Perception of wildlife care Perception of causal factors	Perception is contextual	Visualization of the state of wildlife and the causes of extinction builds awareness, inspires and encourages support

Source: Private Document, 2023

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the animated music video "Sabda Alam" can be a model for informative and communicative campaign media as a strategy to shape audience perceptions about environmental problems, especially about the threat of extinction of endemic birds in Indonesia. The results of the research show that the level of presentation is dominant in the formation of visual perception as a social perception of the environment, namely perception of message content, perception of animated visualization, perception of visual narrative, perception of music, perception of environmental knowledge, perception of wildlife care, and perception of causal factors of endemic birds extinction. The strategy implemented refers to the target product segmentation guidelines for the position of viewing products, in particular, the entire community as the target of communication. This video also uses the method of delivering messages in 2D animation visualization, then carries out media campaign promotions through YouTube and Instagram social media, as well as participating in international film festivals. The three important goals to be achieved are first, supporting government programs in the protection of wild animals, as stated in the Instruction of the Minister of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia Number INS.1/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM//1/6/2022 concerning the Protection of Wild Animals. Threats of Entrapment and Poaching Inside and Outside Forest Areas. Second, encouraging a productive

and competitive young generation through Vocational High Schools. Third, build public awareness to be jointly involved and proactive in preserving the environment.

The animated music video "Sabda Alam" was proven to be able to attract the attention of the audience, and received an award at the 2021 Balinale International Film Festival, so that overall, this campaign media model can cover the expected principles of benefit, response and satisfaction. People who watch this animated music video can also believe that the information conveyed through the viewing product is a visual narrative based on fact and fiction. This is because the strategy for forming visual perception is also based on social perception, where the audience, as a society, bases its understanding and ability to read messages on perception based on experience, selective perception, evaluative perception, and contextual perception. It is hoped that the results of this research can become an academic reference, especially in the field of visual communication design, and become an inspirational and communicative campaign media model in the development of design products in the creative industry.

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